

her nine grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Additionally, her gift of writing poetry has been enjoyed and taken up by so many in her family.

As my wife, Kris, and I travel across the 15th District, we meet so many remarkable people. Their stories have truly touched our lives.

The life story of Marguerite Tremaine has touched our hearts.

This concludes my Report from Pennsylvania.

ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL AT THE WE THE PEOPLE . . . NATIONAL FINALS

HON. TOM BLILEY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the outstanding performance of the students at the Governor's School for Governmental and International Studies in Richmond, VA, in the We the People . . . the Citizen and the Constitution national finals held May 1–3, 1999 in Washington, DC.

After successfully competing against other students from Virginia and winning the Virginia State finals, these students went on to win honorable mention as a top ten finalist in the We the People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution. This is the first time a school from Virginia placed in the top ten.

These bright and talented students from the Governor's School competed against 50 other schools comprising more than 1,200 students from across the country. They have worked extremely hard to reach the national finals and demonstrated their superior knowledge and understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

I commend the students and their teacher Philip Sorrentino on this outstanding achievement.

ADDRESS OF RUTH B. MANDEL AT THE NATIONAL CIVIC COMMEMORATION OF THE DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, April 13, Members of Congress joined with representatives of the diplomatic corps, executive and judicial branch officials, and Holocaust survivors and their families to commemorate the National Days of Remembrance in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol.

The ceremony coincided with the 60th anniversary of the voyage of the SS *St. Louis*, which set sail from Germany in April 1939, carrying more than 900 Jews away from Nazi terror. Denied entry to both Cuba and the United States, the *St. Louis* was forced to send its frightened passengers back to Europe just months before the onset of World War II. Many of them were eventually murdered in

Auschwitz, Treblinka, and the other death camps of Hitler's Holocaust.

While we cannot rectify the wrongs of generations ago, we can apply the lesson of the *St. Louis* to the crises of today. In the Europe of 1999, innocent civilians are once again being deported, abused, raped and murdered. While the scale of Serbian atrocities in Kosovo does not approach the enormity of the Holocaust, the precedent that would be set by ignoring this ethnic cleansing cannot be tolerated.

Ruth B. Mandel, the Vice Chair of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, thoughtfully communicated the moral meaning of the *St. Louis* voyage at the Days of Remembrance ceremony: "Today, tens of thousands of people in great distress stare at us from the front pages of newspapers and from television screens. Victims of humankind's evil impulses and behavior cry out at the last moment of the twentieth century. Their agonies testify to the continuation of a blind and vicious inhumanity we human beings visit on one another. Today, as we gather here to honor the dead, let us cherish the living."

Ruth B. Mandel fled Nazi Germany with her parents, Mechel and Lea Blumenstock, in 1939 on the SS *St. Louis*. When the ship returned to Europe, the Blumenstock family was accepted by England. They arrived in the United States in 1947. Professor Mandel is now Director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. From 1971 to 1994, she served as Director of the Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers, where she remains affiliated as a Senior Scholar. Professor Mandel was appointed to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council in 1991, was named its Vice Chairperson in 1993, and was the founding Chairperson of its Committee on Conscience.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the full text of Professor Mandel's address at the Days of Remembrance ceremony to be placed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE

The occasion for a new exhibition which opened yesterday here in Washington at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is the 60th anniversary of the voyage of the German ship, the *St. Louis*, into the pages of a shameful history. Many people have heard about this ship carrying over 900 human beings whom no one wanted, or have seen newspaper photographs of the refugees crowding the ship's railings, peering across the short distance between exile on the high seas and rescue on the land. The land, within easy view, was entirely outside of reach. Denied entry by Cuba and shunned by the United States, the ship turned back toward Europe. In a humane and merciful moment, four countries agreed to open their doors. Unfortunately, those passengers who were taken in by Belgium, the Netherlands and France soon found themselves once more trapped under Nazi control. The luckier passengers who were sent to England managed to escape the Nazis and, in some instances, help to wage the war against them.

Several weeks ago, I was taken to a work room behind the scenes at the Museum for an early glimpse of a few of the displays and artifacts being prepared for the new exhibition about this chapter from the Holocaust. I walked around the room looking at photographs of passengers and reading descriptive panels about the plight of over 900 Jewish men, women and children reviled by Germany, repulsed by Cuba, rejected by the

United States. I came upon a piece of paper covered with signatures. Apparently this was a "thank you" page to Morris Troper, European director for the Joint Distribution Committee, who had devoted himself to saving the passengers and had negotiated their entry into Great Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. As a gesture of gratitude for his great efforts and his leadership on behalf of their plight, passengers had signed their names on a sheet of paper for him to keep. And there, right there on that page of signatures hanging on a wall in the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, there was my mother's unmistakable handwriting. There was her name, Lea Blumenstock, written in exactly the way she had signed letters and checks, exactly as she signed my report cards from school, our medical insurance forms, her citizenship papers. I stood electrified in front of that name I had seen written hundreds of other times in my life. It was as familiar as her voice or her smile. All the stories about the past transformed themselves in that instant into the living reality of my mother's distinctive signature there among the rest. She was there on that ship, she signed that piece of paper. What was she thinking? What was she feeling? Was I, an infant, nearby in someone's arms while she signed, or being held by my father, or in the little stroller they had with them in the photograph of the three of us on the ship's deck? She signed that paper. My God, we really were there!

Over the years, the *St. Louis* and its journey to nowhere have taken on qualities of a mythic tale. But for me and about 100 others still able to bear witness (many here in this awesome room today), this story is especially poignant. Its characters and plot line are no fabled product of someone's heated imagination. WE are the characters, and the plot is the story of what happened to us. The voyage of the *St. Louis* is my family's personal life experience. Its outcome determined our fate, shaping my parents' adult lives and my childhood.

A recognition that the Holocaust itself in all its grotesque horror is about real people in real time—about victims and killers, bystanders and heroes, craven and indifferent observers, self deluded participants, every kind of human being we have encountered in life—this realization that the Holocaust is about real human beings in a civilized world is the reality to which the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum bears witness every day. The reality of the event is the Museum's central educational message: what you see here can happen. And it did happen. It is this reality to which the Museum has already, in six short years, exposed twelve million visitors here in Washington and many more in places where exhibits have traveled or educational materials have been distributed.

Like the disrupted, shattered life histories of millions of Europe's Jews, my own large family's experience involved every kind of loss, humiliation and anguish survivors know as well from their Holocaust histories. But our immediate, small family—that is, my father, my mother and myself—we were ultimately much luckier than so many of our relatives.

My childhood was supposed to have played out differently. I was supposed to have grown up as the daughter of a prosperous Viennese family. I was supposed to have had sisters and brothers, aunts, uncles and cousins, grandparents on both sides. It didn't work out that way.

In the aftermath of Kristallnacht in 1938, my father was sent to Dachau, and his 24 year old wife was left with their infant daughter and a mission—to get him out however she could. First, she obtained his release with a single ticket to Shanghai, not